



Inclusive Teaching: Stressors, Impact of Stress, and Coping Strategies of Teachers in Public Schools

Elvony P. Casungcad¹, Rhasie Jane P. Gantuangco², Niña M. Montemor³,
Love Faith M. Ricablanca⁴, Archie L. Tangal⁵, Joseph C. Pepito⁶, Reylan G.
Capuno⁷, Honorio C. Añora⁸, Imelda J. Villarin⁹, Randy C. Mangubat¹⁰,
Emerson D. Peteros¹¹, Raymond C. Espina¹², Veronica O. Calasang¹³

¹⁻¹³Cebu Technological University-Main Campus,

M.J. Cuenco Ave, Cor R. Palma Street, 6000 Cebu, Philippines

Corresponding Author: Love Faith M. Ricablanca (callafaith16@gmail.com)

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2313-6057>

Abstract

This study examined inclusive education's stressors, impacts of stress, and coping strategies among 185 teachers recruited through complete enumeration from selected public schools in Mandaue City Division, Cebu, Philippines during the 2023-2024 school year. A descriptive-correlational research design was utilized to investigate relationships between the variables. Data was collected through a validated and structured questionnaire. Analysis of demographic profiles revealed the majority of respondents were female, aged 31-40 years with 6-10 years of experience. Over half were married. Most held some master's degree units, had received prior inclusive education training, and reported awareness of policies pertaining to inclusion. Results showed teachers experienced moderate overall stress from factors like workload, time constraints, disruptive student behaviors, and insufficient resources. Stress manifested occasionally as exhaustion, frustration, and feelings of being overwhelmed. Coping strategies included discussing issues with colleagues/family and engaging in relaxing activities, but were generally less utilized. Pearson r revealed a significant yet weak relationship between stressors and coping strategies. However, the relationship between stress impacts and coping strategies was non-significant. This suggests coping did not effectively mitigate detrimental stress effects. Notably, neither relationship was strong, with stressors more consistently linked to coping than impacts. These findings highlight the need for holistic teacher wellness programs in Mandaue City Division, addressing diverse challenges through targeted interventions like improved working conditions, adaptive skill-building, and various types of career-stage support. A multi-factorial approach considering the local context is needed to strengthen the resilience and retention of teachers within inclusive education long-term. The study validated the importance of optimizing teacher mental health and well-being given inclusion demands through a customized management plan. By systematically addressing educator needs, sustainability of quality inclusive services can be supported.

Keywords: Special Education, Stressors, Impact of Stress, Coping Strategies, Inclusion Teachers, Descriptive-Correlational, Complete Enumeration, Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines



1. Introduction

Inclusive education aimed to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities or special education needs (Hernando-Malipot, 2023). However, research has shown that implementing truly inclusive practices posed various challenges, especially for frontline teachers in the Philippines (Alcosero et al., 2023; Llanos et al., 2024; Bencito, 2023). While inclusive policies have addressed structural aspects, there remains a lack of understanding on important human factors such as the impact of inclusion-related stress on educators (Quirap, 2022). Prolonged exposure to stress without mitigation poses risks like burnout, anxiety, and depression, which can negatively influence job satisfaction, teacher effectiveness, and student outcomes (Rosco et al., 2021).

It is therefore important to explore inclusion-related stressors and identify effective coping strategies among Filipino teachers (Nelson, 2021). Previous studies conducted in other contexts point to the value of comprehending relationships between teacher stress, coping styles, and well-being outcomes to tailor interventions promoting resilience (Aulén et al., 2021; Ozoemena et al., 2021). Understanding these understudied aspects through a needs assessment of Mandaue City Division inclusion teachers could offer meaningful perspectives on challenges faced and support strengthening (Llanos et al., 2024) against the negative effects of stress at work. Developing a comprehensive mental health and well-being management plan based on findings has the potential to optimize conditions enabling diverse students and teachers alike to achieve their fullest potential through a strengths-based, multi-level approach advancing truly inclusive education (Vaidya & Casey, 2023).

In light of these considerations, the present study "Inclusive Teaching: Stressors, Impacts, and Coping Strategies of Teachers in Public Schools" aimed to contribute new empirical insights with practical applications through a descriptive correlational research design. By examining stressors, impacts on well-being, and coping strategies, this investigation provided a foundation for proposing evidence-driven support promoting the sustainability and quality of inclusion through fostered teacher welfare and resilience over the long term.

2. Methods

2.1. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored within Lazarus and Folkman's (1987) transactional theory of stress and coping, which provides a robust theoretical foundation for understanding the stress process experienced by inclusion teachers. Additionally, the study considered relevant legislative measures, such as Republic Act 4670 and Republic Act 11713, which offer a legal framework for supporting the needs of these educators, as depicted in Figure 1.

Lazarus and Folkman's (1987) transactional stress theory provided a robust framework for this study's examination of inclusion teachers' stressors, impacts, and coping strategies. The theory was used as a guide for analysis specific to the dynamic stress process through cognitive appraisal, emotions, and coping responses to environmental demands over time (Woods et al., 2023). Specifically, it evaluated the appraisal of challenges as threats or benign situations and distinguished between problem-focused and emotion-focused coping styles for addressing stressors directly or regulating emotional reactions.

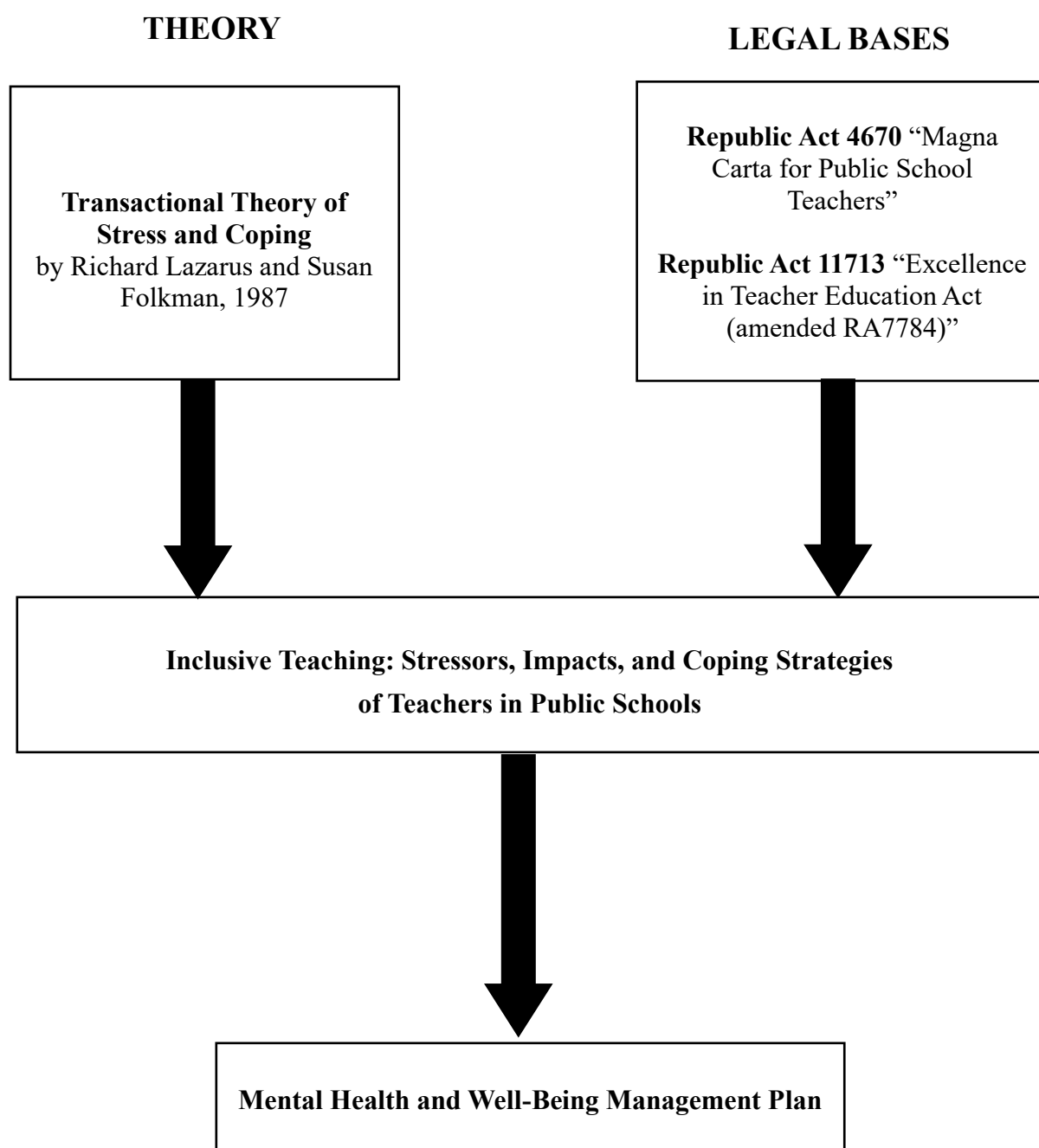


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study



Notably, this model aligned well with the study's aims of assessing inclusion teacher experiences by evaluating stress factors, impacts experienced, and strategies utilized. More importantly, it facilitated an in-depth investigation of these pivotal stress dimensions as an interconnected, process-oriented phenomenon among educators navigating diverse classroom demands. The nuanced transactional framework allowed for meaningful data collection and interpretation of relationships between examined constructs (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987).

Furthermore, key Philippine laws established protective contexts through relevant directives supporting educator rights and development shown to alleviate occupational-related pressures. The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers (Republic Act 4670) mandated continuing education and comprehensive health programs correlating to reduced stress (Ortan et al., 2021), and the Excellence in Teacher Education Act (Republic Act 11713) addressed preparation and financial factors tied to stress through expanded functions of the Teacher Education Council and scholarship programs (Prendergast et al., 2021; Roeser et al., 2022).

2.2. IPO Model

This study was also guided by the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model as depicted in Figure 2. Utilizing a descriptive correlational approach, relationships between input, process, and output regarding the stressors, impact of stress, and coping strategies at Mandaue City Division were examined.

2.2.1. Input. Teacher demographics, stressors, impact of stress, and coping strategies comprised important input domains. Measuring these multi-dimensional factors through survey items furnished valuable contextual and attitudinal data. Background characteristics and perceptual framework served as important controls.

2.2.2. Process. Ethical clearance approval initiated the systematic methodology. Complete enumeration recruited all inclusion teachers to participate. A validated questionnaire then collected response data. Statistical software conducted descriptive and inferential analyses. Correlational techniques revealed interrelationships guiding proposed enhancements.

2.2.3. Output. Directly addressing research questions and hypotheses, a Teacher Mental Health and Well-Being Management Plan was recommended. This evidence-driven proposal aimed to optimize engagement, resilience, and continued service by recommending tailored initiatives strengthening significant determinants. Strategies and scheduled activities targeted modifiable antecedents shown to drive outcomes over the long term. Intended changes and evaluative indicators aligned research utilization with fostering inclusion teacher welfare through focused commitment and multi-level support.

Utilizing the IPO framework provided a structured process for comprehending input variables, methodically analyzing interconnections through the process, and developing a practical output yet systematically designed solution to enhance teacher experiences in Mandaue City Division's inclusive education settings based on conclusions from the needs assessment.

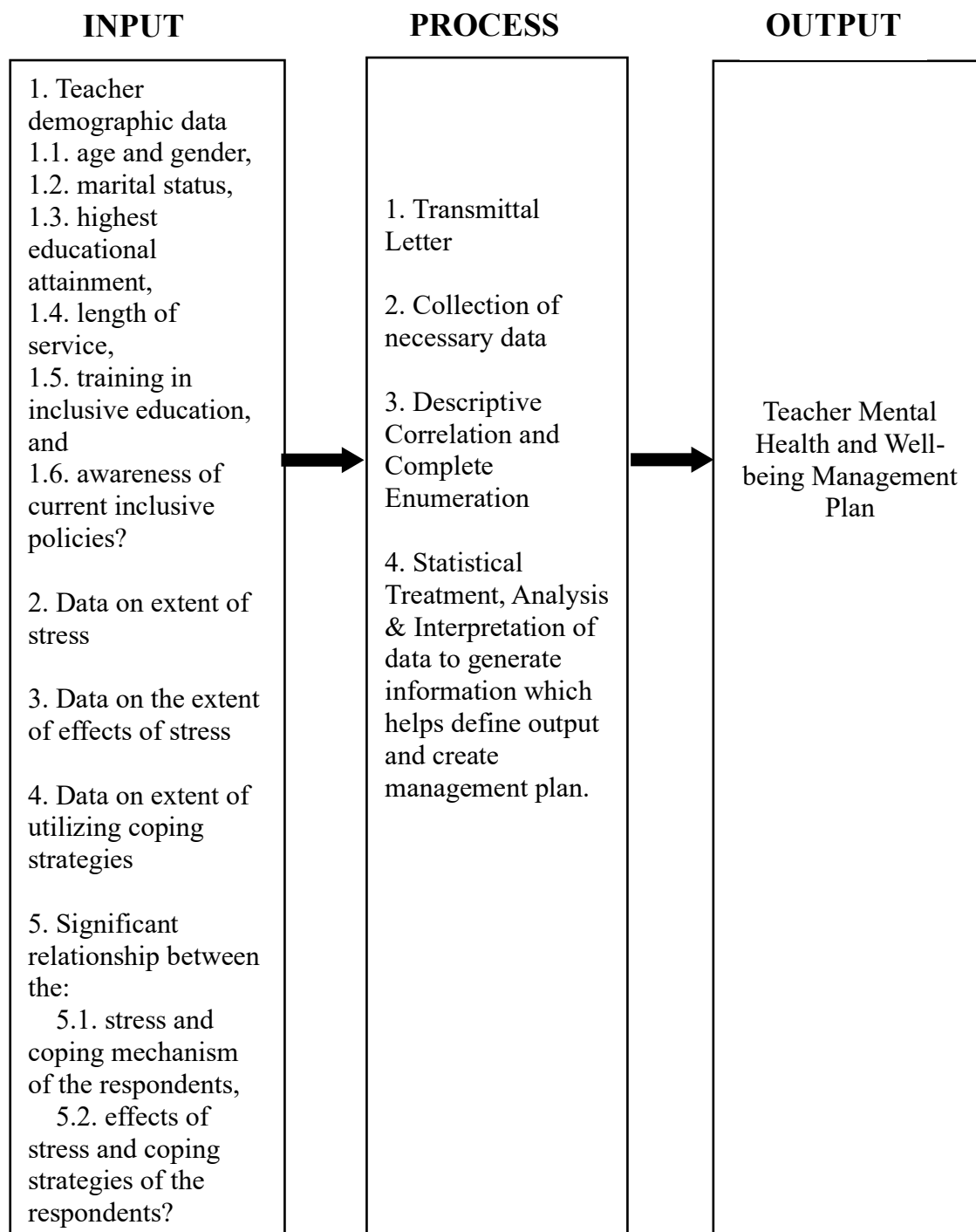


Figure 2. Flow of the Study



2.3. Design

The study utilized a descriptive correlational approach to examine the relationships between inclusion teachers' stressors, impact of stress, and coping strategies. Descriptive correlational is suitable for this study as it allows the researcher to describe the characteristics of the population and determine the association between variables (Salendab, 2023).

A total of 185 respondents were recruited using a complete enumeration, due to its members' small population. Complete enumeration allowed the researcher to obtain data from all inclusion teachers in the selected schools within Mandaue City Division, helping to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the relationships between variables.

Data were then collected using an adapted and validated structured survey, and adhering to the three-stage gathering procedures: preliminary stage which involved securing relevant approvals from authorities through official transmittals; data gathering stage which involved survey questionnaire distribution to and retrieval of responses from the respondents; and post data gathering stage which gathered data were organized, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate statistical methods and tools.

Before distribution, the adapted survey questionnaire was reviewed by experts for content and face validity. An online survey questionnaire with similar content prepared through Google Forms was likewise made available for respondents who were not physically present on the site. Then, respondents answered the survey voluntarily and anonymously.

Moreover, the data gathered from the returned questionnaires were encoded and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency counts and percentages comprised the descriptive analysis of teacher demographics. The Pearson r correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between stressors, impact of stress, and coping strategies. Results were then analyzed and interpreted to address each research question and hypothesis.

3. Results

3.1. Profile of the Respondents

The profile of respondents showed that most teachers were female between 31-40 years old, with the majority being married and having undertaken graduate master's units. While experience levels varied, most had 6-10 years of experience. Additionally, the vast majority received training in inclusive education and reported awareness of related principles.

3.2. Stressor, Impact, and Coping Strategies

The descriptive analysis uncovered notable insights. Regarding stressors, teachers reported an overall moderate stress level induced by various workplace factors. Intrinsic demands like excessive workload and insufficient time to complete tasks, as well as extrinsic constraints including disruptive student behaviors such as impoliteness, rudeness, loudness and noise-induced moderate stress.

Regarding impacts, stress effects were experienced sometimes on average. Feelings of occasional exhaustion, frustration, and feeling overwhelmed from intrinsic job demands appeared most common, though still at a moderate frequency.



Examining coping strategies utilization showed adaptive applications were generally less utilized on the whole. However, a few strategies emerged as modestly employed, including organizing time and setting priorities, restructuring personal/professional expectations or goals, discussing issues with colleagues, as well as taking courses and workshops to improve skills. Notably, prevalent stressors arose from both intrinsic and extrinsic sources, necessitating alleviation. Impacts occurred sometimes, predominantly linked to intrinsic demands. Meanwhile, coping approaches remained moderately underutilized overall despite a few strategically employed techniques.

3.3. Significant relationships between Stress - Coping Strategies, and Impact of Stress - Coping Strategies

Hypothesis testing generated noteworthy insights. Regarding the relationship between stressors experienced and coping strategies employed, a Pearson's r revealed a negligible positive correlation ($r=0.161$, $p=0.028$). Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a statistically significant albeit weak relationship. In contrast, when examining the association between impacts of stress and coping strategies utilized, results showed a negligible positive correlation ($r=0.092$, $p=0.213$). Given the p -value exceeded the significance threshold, the null hypothesis was not rejected, suggesting no significant relationship.

Notably, while neither relationship was strong, stressors appeared somewhat more consistently linked to coping approaches than stress impacts. This nuanced finding aligned with literature noting associations depend on contextual influences, as relationships varied in presence and magnitude (Dailey et al, 2023; Jakubowski & Sitko-Dominik, 2021; Soncini et al., 2021).

Regardless, implications from both analyses reinforced targeting adaptive coping applications as integral to fostering resilience against persistent role demands. Well-designed interventions centered on building capacity to manage stress hold promise for cultivating supportive environments empowering all members of the educational community to achieve their fullest potential through sustained mental wellness and professional competence over the long term.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

4.1. Discussion

4.1.1. The Problem

The study aimed to examine inclusive teaching: stressors, impact of stress, and coping strategies of teachers in public schools during the school year 2023-2024 as the basis for a proposed Mental Health and Well-Being Management Plan. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

4.1.1.1. What is the profile of respondents in terms of:

- 4.1.1.1.1. age and gender,
- 4.1.1.1.2. marital status,
- 4.1.1.1.3. highest educational attainment,
- 4.1.1.1.4. length of service,
- 4.1.1.1.5. training in inclusive education, and



- 4.1.1.1.6. awareness of current inclusive policies?
- 4.1.1.2. To what extent do the respondents experience stress in handling inclusive classes?
- 4.1.1.3. What is the extent of the effects of stress to the respondents who are handling inclusive classes?
- 4.1.1.4. To what extent do the respondents utilize the coping strategies to overcome the stress they experience in handling inclusive classes?
- 4.1.1.5. Is there a significant relationship between the:
 - 4.1.1.5.1. stress and coping mechanism of the respondents,
 - 4.1.1.5.2. effects of stress and coping strategies of the respondents?

4.1.2. Profile of the Respondents

The profile of the teacher respondents provided valuable insights into their demographic characteristics, educational qualifications, experience levels, training backgrounds, and awareness of inclusion.

4.1.2.1. Age and Gender

The data on the age and gender distribution of the respondents, as presented in Table 1, provided valuable insights into the demographic composition of the teachers handling inclusive classes.

Table 1
Age and Gender of the Respondents

Age (in years)	Female		Male		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
51 and above	14	7.57	3	1.62	17	9.19
41-50	37	20.00	5	2.70	42	22.70
31-40	75	40.54	10	5.41	85	45.95
21-30	32	17.30	9	4.86	41	22.16
Total	158	85.41	27	14.59	185	100.00

A majority were between 31-40 years old, indicating relatively experienced teachers. Females heavily dominated at around 85.41%, consistently with the profession attracting more women. 17 teachers comprising of 9.19% were aged 51+, suggesting a small portion of the respondents were near-retirement.

A study in Australia found female educators in mid-career reported highest stress levels, indicating a need for supportive programs aiding work-life management (Robinson, 2022). Mifsud (2023) also noted initiatives benefiting teachers at various career phases strengthened inclusion policy implementation and teacher retention over time. Similarly, other research linked married women's job permanence in human services to accommodations enabling work-family integration (Kossek & Lee, 2021).



By considering the age and gender dynamics of the teaching staff, the management plan can better address the diverse needs and challenges faced by the educators, ultimately supporting their well-being and the effective implementation of inclusive practices.

4.1.2.2. Marital Status

The data presented in Table 2 provided insights into the marital status distribution of the respondents, which is an important factor to consider in the context of inclusive teaching practices.

Table 2
Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	f	%
Single	58	31.35
Married	120	64.86
Separated	6	3.24
Widower	1	0.54
Total	185	100.00

The high percentage of married respondents likely implied family responsibilities that could have contributed to stress levels. Historically, the teaching profession has skewed towards married female workers, a demographic still reflected here. A proposed mental health plan needed strategies to support work-life harmony for married staff.

Flexi-time or stress leave may have prevented burnout from competing priorities. Likewise, single or bereaved teachers could have benefited from collegial social activities to ease professional pressure.

Previous studies had found marriage buffered some workplace stressors (Peng et al., 2022). Furthermore, Kossek & Lee (2021) also noted initiatives enabling better work-family integration aided retention, especially for married women in helping roles. Similarly, mentorship assisted newly single or widowed staff address changes (Baroudi, 2022).

By considering the diverse personal situations of the teachers, as highlighted by the marital status data, the management plan could have been strengthened to promote staff wellness and inclusion. A nuanced understanding of the demographic realities would have informed the design of more targeted interventions to support the teachers effectively.

4.1.2.3. Highest Educational Attainment

The data presented in Table 3 provided insights into the highest educational attainment of the respondents, which is an important factor to consider in the context of inclusive teaching practices.

Table 3
Highest Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Educational Attainment	f	%
Doctorate Degree	7	3.78
With Doctorate Units	8	4.32
Master's Graduate	18	9.73
With Master's Units	129	69.73



Bachelor's Degree	23	12.43
Total	185	100.00

Consequently, this indicated a dedication to ongoing learning. The plan potentially could have considered subsidizing degree coursework to motivate further qualification uptake. Recognition of current efforts encouraged future skills development critical to quality teaching over the lengthy reform period.

Research associated higher qualifications with more positive inclusion perspectives (Savolainen et al., 2022). Similarly, continuous learning opportunities also aided special educators' self-efficacy and retention (Gailey-Burdine, 2021). Facilitating accessible, skills-based training sustained competent, confident workforces.

By advocating accessible qualification pathways, educators felt empowered and establishments retained valuable staff steering transformation forward. Proactively cultivating talent-optimized individual capacities and systemic longevity. A study in Taiwan likewise found ongoing competency training mediated stress when teachers felt equipped for challenges (Liu et al., 2022).

4.1.2.4. Length of Service

The data presented in Table 4 provided insights into the length of service of the respondents, which is an important factor to consider in the context of inclusive teaching practices.

Table 4
Length of Service of the Respondents

Length of Service (in years)	f	%
16 and above	29	15.68
11-15	33	17.84
6-10	68	36.76
1-5	38	20.54
Less than one year	17	9.19
Total	185	100.00

This spectrum of experience levels underscores the evolving complexity of teachers' roles over time. Those with 6-15 years have largely transitioned out of novice stages yet still have several years left in their careers. Supporting this mid-career group is paramount for retention.

The mental health plan should adopt a phase-sensitive approach. Early-career workshops could build confidence through demonstration classrooms and communities of practice. Mid-career staff may value enrichment seminars and leadership opportunities to revitalize motivation. Mentorship circles allow seasoned teachers to prevent burnout through peer counseling.

Prior research confirms experience diversifies support needs (Ryan et al., 2022). Tailored programs promoting professional growth at all stages help satisfied, stable workforces (Groenewald et al., 2023).



4.1.2.5. Training in Inclusive Education

The data presented in Table 5 provided insights into the respondents' training in inclusive education, which is a crucial factor in the successful implementation of inclusive practices.

Table 5
Respondents' Training in Inclusive Education

Training in Inclusive Education	f	%
With Training	155	83.78
No Training	30	16.22
Total	185	100.00

This signified that most teachers working with students with special needs had undergone inclusive education coursework or professional development opportunities. Such findings corresponded with government efforts to equip all teachers with basic competencies in teaching diverse learners through reforms like Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, and recently Inclusive Education Act.

Given that inclusive teaching experience takes time to fully apply learnings, providing refresher trainings or advanced workshops for those with prior exposure could potentially help bolster their knowledge and skills as practices evolve. Furthermore, intensive mentoring may aid the single untrained respondent acclimate into their inclusive role.

Preceding studies affirmed high-quality training promoted positive attitudes toward inclusion (Yu & Cho, 2022; Love & Horn, 2021). Therefore, continuing to invest in ongoing training as needs and policies change was vital to empower teachers and fortify their mental health over the long run.

4.1.2.6. Awareness of Inclusive Education

The data presented in Table 6 provided insights into the respondents' awareness of inclusive education, which is a crucial factor in the successful implementation of inclusive practices.

Table 6
Respondents' Awareness of Inclusive Education

Awareness of Inclusive Education	f	%
With Awareness	171	92.43
No Awareness	14	7.57
Total	185	100.00

This implied most teachers were conscious of inclusion but progress was still needed school-wide. Occasional gaps threatened inconsistent support and could raise stress levels. Recognizing this helped identify orientation as an area of focus.

Previous research correlated awareness, knowledge and positive attitudes with successful inclusion outcomes (Alzyoudi et al., 2021; Reina et al., 2021). In contrast, limited awareness was also tied to increased stress and reluctance regarding practices (Lyra et al., 2023; Márquez



& Melero-Aguilar, 2022). Nearly universal but incomplete consciousness highlighted the need for sustained engagement. Hence, analyzing past awareness provided basis for recommending ongoing orientation as part of the Management Plan, to further strengthen practices and minimize stressors.

4.1.3. Stressors while Handling Inclusive Education

The data presented in Table 7 provided insights into the respondents' stressors while handling inclusive classes. The key findings are as follows: Most indicators fell under moderately or quite stressful, with insufficient time, workload, noisy students and inadequate resources as top stressors. Overall stress was moderately high. This implied inclusive teaching took a serious toll on wellness. Factors like time constraints, workload demands and lack of support likely contributed most to stress levels.

Consequently, high stress could have negatively impacted performance and health, affecting research goals. Addressing identified stress factors became crucial for the Mental Health Plan to lower educators' burden and ensure sustainability of inclusive services.

Table 7
Respondents' stressors while handling inclusive classes

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	In general, how stressful do you find being a teacher dealing with students with special needs?	3.21	Moderately Stressful
2	Loud, noisy students	3.48	Quite Stressful
3	Poor career opportunities	3.11	Moderately Stressful
4	Not enough time allotted to do the work	3.47	Quite Stressful
5	Inadequate disciplinary policy of the school	3.10	Moderately Stressful
6	Participation in IEP (Individualized educational plan) meetings about students	2.78	Moderately Stressful
7	Students impolite or rude behavior	3.69	Quite Stressful
8	Inadequate salary	3.61	Quite Stressful
9	Too much work to do	3.83	Quite Stressful
10	Attitudes and behavior of school principal or head of the special education department in school	2.92	Moderately Stressful
11	Responsibility for the students' progress/learning	2.99	Moderately Stressful
12	Writing and on-going evaluation of IEPs for students for students with special needs [paperwork]	2.99	Moderately Stressful
13	Low status of the teaching profession	3.00	Moderately Stressful
14	Poorly motivated students	3.27	Moderately Stressful
15	Lack of recognition for good teaching	2.93	Moderately Stressful
16	Dealing with the parents of students	2.89	Moderately Stressful
17	Constant monitoring of the students' behavior	2.91	Moderately Stressful



18	Inadequate equipment and instructional materials	3.38	Moderately Stressful
19	Demands on after-school time	3.33	Moderately Stressful
20	Lack of effective consultation and assistance	3.16	Moderately Stressful
21	Students' defiance of teacher authority	3.28	Moderately Stressful
22	Attitudes and behavior of other teachers/professionals	2.86	Moderately Stressful
23	Having to punish students or use aversive techniques	2.72	Moderately Stressful
24	Lack of participation in decision-making	2.84	Moderately Stressful
25	Large number of students that lack of time to spend with individual kids	3.25	Moderately Stressful
26	Evaluation by principals or supervisors	3.10	Moderately Stressful
27	Threat of aggression/physical harm	3.17	Moderately Stressful
28	Lack of appreciation from your students	2.59	Mildly Stressful
29	Inability to meet your personal or professional goals	3.04	Moderately Stressful
30	Lack of fun or enjoyment involved in teaching	2.76	Moderately Stressful
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.12	Moderately Stressful

Legend: 4.21-5.00-Extremely Stressful; 3.41-4.20-Quite Stressful; 2.61-3.40-Moderately Stressful; 1.81-2.60-Mildly Stressful; 1.00-1.80-Not at all Stressful

Previous research similarly discovered workload, time pressure, student behavior and insufficient assistance as primary stressors (Antoniou et al., 2023; Nwoko et al., 2023). Related studies observed connections between such stressors and decreased efficacy, burnout and poor instruction over time if unaddressed (Reeves et al., 2024; Sokal & Trudel, 2023). Considering these supported that addressing stress factors was vital.

4.1.4. Impact of Stress

The data presented in Table 8 provided insights into the extent of the effects of stress on the respondents who were handling inclusive classes. The key findings are as follows: Impact of stress, with most indicators falling under "sometimes" or "once in a while", and feeling exhausted, frustrated, overwhelmed occurring more regularly.

Table 8
Impact of stress on the respondents who are handling inclusive classes

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	How often do you feel exhausted?	3.44	Sometimes
2	How often do you feel frustrated?	3.21	Sometimes
3	How often do you feel angry from the students having special educational needs?	2.75	Sometimes
4	How often do you feel depressed/ sad?	2.84	Sometimes
5	How often do you feel nervous/ anxious?	2.72	Sometimes
6	How often do you have headaches?	2.96	Sometimes



7	How often do you feel your heart beating fast?	2.70	Sometimes
8	How often do you feel unable to cope?	2.66	Sometimes
9	How often do you get an upset stomach?	2.39	Once in a While
10	How often do you feel irritable?	2.78	Sometimes
11	How often do you feel guilty about not doing enough?	3.03	Sometimes
12	How often do you feel tearful?	2.70	Sometimes
13	How often do you feel like quitting teaching student having special educational needs?	2.52	Once in a While
14	How often do you feel distant from students having special needs?	2.35	Once in a While
15	How often do you feel unsuccessful about teaching students having special needs?	2.75	Sometimes
16	How often do you feel bored by your work?	2.49	Once in a While
17	How often do you feel overwhelmed by your work?	3.29	Sometimes
18	How often does school stress carry over to other aspects of your life?	3.14	Sometimes
Aggregate Weighted Mean		2.82	Sometimes

Legend: 5.17-6.00-Almost Always 4.33-5.16-Very Often; 3.50-4.32-Often; 2.67-3.49-Sometimes; 1.83-2.66-Once in a while; 1.00-1.82-Hardly ever

This implied inclusive teaching took a considerable emotional toll, with factors like exhaustion, frustration and feeling overwhelmed from work surfacing more frequently. If left unaddressed, long-term stress effects could progressively deteriorate well-being over time. Considering these implications aimed to improve conditions overall consistent with research objectives of supporting educators and sustaining quality inclusion.

Prior studies found associations between stress effects such as emotional exhaustion, depressive symptoms, and physical complaints among inclusive teachers (Agyapong et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2022). Perpetual stress without mitigation could potentially lead to serious issues like burnout (Juárez & Becton, 2024). Reducing stress effects formed an important component of the wellness plan to sustainably support educators long-term.

4.1.5. Coping Strategies Utilized

The data presented in Table 9 provided insights into the extent to which the respondents utilized various coping strategies to overcome the stress they experienced in handling inclusive classes.

Table 9
Respondents reported coping strategies to overcome the stress they experience in handling inclusive classes

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	Discussing problems with professional colleagues	2.88	Utilized
2	Discussing problems with personal friends and family	2.81	Utilized
3	Leaving the school problems at school	2.51	Utilized
4	Taking courses and workshops to improve skill	2.83	Utilized
5	Organizing your time and setting priorities	3.17	Utilized
6	Doing relaxing activities [hobby]	2.84	Utilized
7	Taking a nap; forgetting it; walk away for awhile	2.71	Utilized
8	Taking a day off	2.56	Utilized
9	Restructuring to improve personal/professional expectations or goals	2.91	Utilized



10	Walking/jogging/maintaining diet and exercise	2.50	Utilized
11	Drinking coffee and energy drinks	2.44	Less Utilized
12	Using substances or prescribed medication (alcohol, drugs, anti-depressants, anti-anxiety, stimulants etc...)	1.45	Not Utilized
13	Gain or loss of appetite (eating more or eating less)	2.15	Less Utilized
14	Smoking cigarettes	1.16	Not Utilized
15	Getting professional counseling or therapy	1.35	Not Utilized
Aggregate Weighted Mean		2.42	Less Utilized

Legend: 3.25-4.00-Highly Utilized; 2.50-3.24-Utilized; 1.75-2.49-Less Utilized; 1.00-1.74-Not Utilized

Respondents had utilized various coping strategies for stress according to 15 indicators. The aggregate weighted mean of 2.42 indicated strategies were generally "less utilized." Only discussing problems with colleagues and setting priorities attained higher ratings of "utilized" or "highly utilized," suggesting reliance on intrinsic techniques over external supports. Consequently, this implied limited reliance on adaptive strategies to effectively manage distress.

Without sufficient use of evidence-based coping approaches, stress risks remained inadequately addressed, jeopardizing well-being, performance, and commitment long-term as demands persisted. This reinforced training on effective techniques within management plans. Previous research found underutilization of problem-solving coping associated with decreased well-being (Rettig, 2023; Brannon & Clark, 2023). Similarly, studies linked avoidance strategies to poorer outcomes versus approach methods (Wang et al., 2022). Supporting adaptive applications strengthened individual welfare and systemic continuity over time.

The implications were that proposed plans urgently required skill-building to foster reliable coping applications countering occupational strain. Empowering educators with contextually relevant self-care toolkits potentially optimized efficacy and retention throughout reforms' extensive duration and scope.

4.1.6. Test of Relationship between the Stress and Coping Strategies

The results presented in Table 11 tested the relationship between the stress experienced by the teachers and their coping strategies using the Pearson r correlation coefficient.

Table 10
Test of Relationship between the stress and coping strategies of the respondents

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Stress and Coping Strategies	0.161*	Negligible Positive	0.028	Reject Ho	Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

The r-value was 0.161, which suggested a negligible positive relationship. Consequently, the p-value was 0.028. Since this value was less than the level of significance value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was accepted. Based on the p-value being less than 0.05, the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between stress and coping strategies was rejected.



Therefore, there was a significant relationship between the stress experienced by teachers and the coping strategies they utilized.

Previous studies had found significant relationships between teacher stress and coping. For example, Candeias et al. (2021) and Ansley et al. (2021) found adaptive coping strategies significantly reduced inclusion teacher stress. The current significant findings were consistent with previous research that found relationships.

The test of the relationship between stress and coping strategies among the respondents revealed a significant, albeit negligible, positive correlation. This suggests that as teachers experience higher levels of stress, they tend to utilize coping strategies to a greater extent, though the relationship is not strong enough to have a significant impact on their overall well-being. The findings are consistent with previous research, which has found that adaptive coping strategies can significantly reduce inclusion teacher stress. However, the non-significant relationship between the effects of stress and coping strategies indicates that the teachers' coping mechanisms may not be effectively mitigating the negative impacts of stress. This highlights the need for comprehensive teacher training and support programs that address the unique challenges faced by educators in inclusive settings, including the development of more effective coping strategies to manage stress and promote long-term well-being.

4.1.7. Test of Relationship between the Effects of Stress and Coping Strategies

The results presented in Table 11 tested the relationship between the effects of stress experienced by the teachers and their utilization of coping strategies using the Pearson r correlation coefficient.

Table 11
Test of Relationship between impact of stress and coping strategies of the respondents

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Effects of Stress and Coping Strategies	0.092	Negligible Positive	0.213	Do not reject H_0	Not Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

As reflected in Table 11, the computed r -value is 0.092, indicating a negligible positive correlation. The p -value is 0.213 which is higher than the 0.05 level of significance. Since the p -value of 0.213 is higher than 0.05, we do not reject the null hypothesis. Based on the p -value and decision, we found that there is no significant relationship between the effects of stress experienced by teachers and their utilization of coping strategies. A previous study by Amata (2022) also found a non-significant relationship between stress effects and coping. The current findings were consistent with Amata (2022), who similarly stated a non-significant relationship between these variables.

The test of the relationship between the effects of stress and coping strategies among the respondents revealed a non-significant, negligible positive correlation, indicating that the negative impacts of stress experienced by teachers, such as emotional exhaustion and burnout, are not significantly influenced by their utilization of coping strategies. This suggests that the



teachers' current coping mechanisms may not be effectively mitigating the detrimental effects of stress, highlighting the need for the development and implementation of more comprehensive and targeted support systems to address teacher well-being in inclusive education settings. The findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach that considers not only coping strategies but also other factors like job satisfaction, work-life balance, and professional development, in order to effectively support teachers and promote their long-term resilience and success in inclusive classrooms.

4.2. Conclusion

The study provided valuable insights into inclusion teachers' profiles, stressors, impacts, coping strategies, and the relationships between stress-coping and impacts of stress-coping at selected schools in Mandaue City Division, Cebu, Philippines. Consequently, several notable conclusions can be drawn:

Firstly, the teacher population was predominantly female, married, and had master's units with middle-career teaching experience. They were mostly trained in inclusion and were aware of inclusion policies. However, stress levels among these educators remained moderately high. Key stressors included workload, time pressures, student behavior and lack of support specific to the local context.

Secondly, stress impacts like exhaustion and frustration occurred sometimes for teachers handling inclusive classrooms. Impacts highlighted the negative effect of persistent strain. Moreover, while some coping strategies were utilized to deal with pressures, overall application across the Mandaue City Division was limited.

Furthermore, a significant but weak correlation was found between stress and coping strategies, suggesting coping increased with stress levels for these teachers. However, the relationship between stress impacts and coping strategies was non-significant, indicating coping did not effectively mitigate detrimental stress effects in this population.

Remarkably, these findings highlight the need for more comprehensive, region-specific teacher mental health and well-being programs in Mandaue City Division. These programs need to address the diverse, local challenges inclusion teachers face through targeted interventions like improved working conditions, adaptive skill-building, and various types of tailored support over the teachers' careers and tenure, and to strengthen long-term resilience and retention while they provide quality inclusive education services.

Acknowledgments

The lead authors are grateful to their research advisor, committee members, university leaders, family and friends for their guidance, expertise, encouragement and support throughout the development and completion of this study.

Authors Contribution

All authors contributed to this study through various roles. The lead authors coordinated data collection and preparation of the final manuscript. An advisor provided guidance and reviewed content. Additional experts from different specializations collaborated to verify accuracy, strengthen the methodology, and refine findings through several rounds of feedback. Their



collaborative review process improved the overall quality, rigor, and impact of reporting the results.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- [1.] Agyapong, B., Brett-MacLean, P., Burbach, L., Agyapong, V. I. O., & Wei, Y. (2023). Interventions to reduce stress and burnout among teachers: A scoping review. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 20(9), 5625. Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/20/9/5625>
- [2.] Alcosero, A., Carcueva, H., Abasolo, M. C. & Arranchado, W., Cabanilla, A. (2023). Preparedness of Regular Teachers in the Implementation of Inclusive Education in the Philippines: A Meta-synthesis. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.17249.79205>
- [3.] Alzyoudi, M., Opoku, M. P., & Moustafa, A. (2021, December). Inclusive higher education in United Arab Emirates: Will perceived knowledge of inclusion impact positively on university students' attitudes towards learning with peers with disabilities?. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 6, p. 793086). Frontiers. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3zbIRO1>
- [4.] Amata, C. L. C. (2022). Level of Stress and Coping Strategies of Public-School Teachers During COVID-19 Pandemic: The Case of Offshore and Philippine Teachers. *AIDE Interdisciplinary Research Journal*, 3, 294-312. Retrieved from <https://journal.aide-inc.net/index.php/aide-irj/article/view/70>
- [5.] Ansley, B. M., Houchins, D. E., Varjas, K., Roach, A., Patterson, D., & Hendrick, R. (2021). The impact of an online stress intervention on burnout and teacher efficacy. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 98, 103251. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0742051X20314426>
- [6.] Antoniou, A. S., Efthymiou, V., Polychroni, F., & Kofa, O. (2023). Occupational stress in mainstream and special needs primary school teachers and its relationship with self-efficacy. *Educational Studies*, 49(1), 200-217. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/49ezfu7p>
- [7.] Aulén, A. M., Pakarinen, E., Feldt, T., & Lerkkanen, M. K. (2021). Teacher coping profiles in relation to teacher well-being: A mixed method approach. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 102, 103323. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0742051X21000470>
- [8.] Baroudi, S. (2022). Leading in times of crisis: Evidence of digital transformational leadership among Arab female educational leaders. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 1-22. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13603124.2022.2108506>
- [9.] Bencito, M. J. G. (2023). Project PATAS (Project Advancing Teacher's Attitude toward SPED): Advancing Inclusive Education in Magallanes. *Best Practices in Disability-Inclusive Education*, 2(1). Retrieved from <https://publication.seameosen.edu.my/index.php/diebook/article/view/378>



- [10.] Brannon, A., & Clark, K. N. (2023). Profiles of Teacher Behavior Management Style: Perceived School Climate, Stress, and Self-Efficacy. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 1-19. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40688-023-00479-z>
- [11.] Candeias, A., Galindo, E., Calisto, I., Borralho, L., & Reschke, K. (2021). Stress and burnout in teaching. Study in an inclusive school workplace. *Health Psychology Report*, 9(1), 63-75. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/mw4eaana>
- [12.] Dailey, S. F., Parker, M. M., & Campbell, A. (2023). Social connectedness, mindfulness, and coping as protective factors during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 101(1), 114-126. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/jcad.12450>
- [13.] Gailey-Burdine, T. M. (2021). Burnout and Self-Efficacy Among Special Education Teachers (Doctoral dissertation, Grand Canyon University). Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/4edjtpfy>
- [14.] Groenewald, E., Kilag, O. K., Cabuenas, M. C., Camangyan, J., Abapo, J. M., & Abendan, C. F. (2023). The Influence of Principals' Instructional Leadership on the Professional Performance of Teachers. *Excellencia: International Multi-disciplinary Journal of Education* (2994-9521), 1(6), 433-443. Retrieved from <https://multijournals.org/index.php/excellencia-imje/article/view/204>
- [15.] Hernando-Malipot, M. (2023, May 19). Let us never dim the lights of inclusive education. *Manila Bulletin*. Accessed from <https://mb.com.ph/2023/5/19/let-us-never-dim-the-lights-of-inclusive-education>
- [16.] Jakubowski, T. D., & Sitko-Dominik, M. M. (2021). Teachers' mental health during the first two waves of the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland. *PloS one*, 16(9), e0257252. Retrieved from <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0257252>
- [17.] Juárez, S. W., & Becton, A. B. (2024). A Self-Care and Wellness Framework in Educator Preparation to Address Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, and Secondary Traumatic Stress. *Action in Teacher Education*, 1-19. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01626620.2024.2319294>
- [18.] Kossek, E. E., & Lee, K. H. (2021). Work-life inclusion for women's career equality. *Organizational Dynamics*. Retrieved from <https://par.nsf.gov/servlets/purl/10233864>
- [19.] Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1987). Transactional theory and research on emotions and coping. *European Journal of personality*, 1(3), 141-169. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/per.2410010304>
- [20.] Liu, Y., Zhao, L., & Su, Y. S. (2022). The impact of teacher competence in online teaching on perceived online learning outcomes during the COVID-19 outbreak: A moderated-mediation model of teacher resilience and age. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(10), 6282. Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/19/10/6282>
- [21.] Llanos, A., Baluyot, L., & Besin, J. M. (2024). Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Inclusive Education in Philippine Elementary Schools. *International Multidisciplinary Journal of Research for Innovation, Sustainability, and Excellence (IMJRISE)*, 1(4), 103-110. Retrieved from <https://risejournals.org/index.php/imjrise/article/view/270>



- [22.] Love, H. R., & Horn, E. (2021). Definition, context, quality: Current issues in research examining high-quality inclusive education. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 40(4), 204-216. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0271121419846342>
- [23.] Lyra, O., Koullapi, K., & Kalogeropoulou, E. (2023). Fears towards disability and their impact on teaching practices in inclusive classrooms: An empirical study with teachers in Greece. *Heliyon*, 9(5). Retrieved from [https://www.cell.com/heliyon/pdf/S2405-8440\(23\)03539-9.pdf](https://www.cell.com/heliyon/pdf/S2405-8440(23)03539-9.pdf)
- [24.] Márquez, C., & Melero-Aguilar, N. (2022). What are their thoughts about inclusion? Beliefs of faculty members about inclusive education. *Higher Education*, 83(4), 829-844. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-021-00706-7>
- [25.] Mifsud, D. (2023). Rethinking the concept of teacher education: a problematization and critique of current policies and practices. In *Teacher Education as an Ongoing Professional Trajectory: Implications for Policy and Practice* (pp. 1-23). Cham: Springer International Publishing. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-28620-9_1
- [26.] Nelson, R. (2021). Teacher and Administrator Perceptions about Administrative Support for Teacher Inclusion, Successful Inclusion Implementations, and Barriers to Inclusion (Doctoral dissertation, Northcentral University). Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/2c4hs6cv>
- [27.] Nwoko, J. C., Emeto, T. I., Malau-Aduli, A. E., & Malau-Aduli, B. S. (2023). A systematic review of the factors that influence teachers' occupational wellbeing. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(12), 6070. Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/20/12/6070>
- [28.] Ortan, F., Simut, C., & Simut, R. (2021). Self-efficacy, job satisfaction and teacher well-being in the K-12 educational system. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(23), 12763. Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/18/23/12763>
- [29.] Ozoemena, E. L., Agbaje, O. S., Ogundu, L., Ononuju, A. H., Umoke, P. C. I., Iweama, C. N., ... & Obute, A. J. (2021). Psychological distress, burnout, and coping strategies among Nigerian primary school teachers: a school-based cross-sectional study. *BMC public health*, 21(1), 2327. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12889-021-12397-x>
- [30.] Peng, J., Wu, W. H., Doolan, G., Choudhury, N., Mehta, P., Khatun, A., ... & Ciurtin, C. (2022). Marital status and gender differences as key determinants of COVID-19 impact on wellbeing, job satisfaction and resilience in health care workers and staff working in academia in the UK during the first wave of the pandemic. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 10, 928107. Retrieved from <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2022.928107/full>
- [31.] Prendergast, M., Ní Dhuinn, M., & Loxley, A. (2021). "I worry about money every day": The financial stress of second-level initial teacher education in Ireland. *Issues in Educational Research*, 31(2), 586-605. Retrieved from <https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/informit.053210098349737>



- [32.] Quirap, E.A. (2022). Teachers Burnout Revisited: An Analytical Evidence? Retrieved from <https://ijrp.org/paper-detail/2935> DOI: 10.47119/IJRP100971320222972
- [33.] Reeves, A., Pattinson, M., & Butavicius, M. (2024). The sleepless sentinel: factors that predict burnout and sleep quality in cybersecurity professionals. *Information & Computer Security*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/4ceeWTZ>
- [34.] Reina, R., Haegele, J. A., Pérez-Torralba, A., Carbonell-Hernández, L., & Roldan, A. (2021). The influence of a teacher-designed and-implemented disability awareness programme on the attitudes of students toward inclusion. *European Physical Education Review*, 27(4), 837-853. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1356336X21999400>
- [35.] Republic of the Philippines. (2012). Republic Act 10173 - Data Privacy Act of 2012. Retrieved from <https://privacy.gov.ph/data-privacy-act/>
- [36.] Rettig, J. (2023). Subjective Well-Being of Teachers in K-12 Christian Schools (Doctoral dissertation, Southeastern University). Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/24bzk3mu>
- [37.] Robinson, J. A. (2022). Factors Influencing the Working Lives of Australian Secondary School Music Teachers (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/29878>
- [38.] Roeser, R. W., Mashburn, A. J., Skinner, E. A., Choles, J. R., Taylor, C., Rickert, N. P., ... & Sorenson, J. (2022). Mindfulness training improves middle school teachers' occupational health, well-being, and interactions with students in their most stressful classrooms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 114(2), 408. Retrieved from <https://psycnet.apa.org/journals/edu/114/2/408/>
- [39.] Rosco, R. C., Yuayan, A. P., & Pilongo, L. W. E. (2021). Public School Teachers' Psychological Capital, Emotional Labor, and Stress Index. *ACADEME University of Bohol, Graduate School and Professional Studies*, 18(1), 1-21. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3VVmTYL>
- [40.] Ryan, M., Rowan, L., Lunn Brownlee, J., Bourke, T., L'Estrange, L., Walker, S., & Churchward, P. (2022). Teacher education and teaching for diversity: A call to action. *Teaching Education*, 33(2), 194-213. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10476210.2020.1844178>
- [41.] Salendab, F. (2023). Proposed instructional scheme in the new normal education: Basis for pedagogical strategies/practices. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6(8), 712-719. Retrieved from https://scimatic.org/show_manuscript/935
- [42.] Savolainen, H., Malinen, O. P., & Schwab, S. (2022). Teacher efficacy predicts teachers' attitudes towards inclusion—a longitudinal cross-lagged analysis. *International journal of inclusive education*, 26(9), 958-972. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13603116.2020.1752826>
- [43.] Sokal, L., & Trudel, L. E. (2023). Effects of a school-based, post-pandemic recovery intervention on Canadian educators. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 5, 100298. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666374023000730>
- [44.] Soncini, A., Politi, E., & Matteucci, M. C. (2021). Teachers navigating distance learning during COVID-19 without feeling emotionally exhausted: The protective role of self-



- efficacy. *School Psychology*, 36(6), 494. Retrieved from <https://psycnet.apa.org/journals/spq/36/6/494/>
- [45.] Supreme Court of the Philippines Library Services. (1968). Republic Act No. 4670: The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers. Retrieved from <https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebookshelf/showdocs/2/6799>
- [46.] Supreme Court of the Philippines Library Services. (2022). Republic Act No. 11713. Retrieved from <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2022/04/27/republic-act-no-11713/>
- [47.] Vaidya, S. R., & Hanna, C. (2023). The Four-Capital Theory as Framework for Teacher Retention and Attrition. *International Education Studies*, 16(6), 21-32. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1410450>
- [48.] Wang, H., Lee, S. Y., & Hall, N. C. (2022). Coping profiles among teachers: Implications for emotions, job satisfaction, burnout, and quitting intentions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 68, 102030. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0361476X21000898>
- [49.] Woods, S., Sebastian, J., Herman, K. C., Huang, F. L., Reinke, W. M., & Thompson, A. M. (2023). The relationship between teacher stress and job satisfaction as moderated by coping. *Psychology in the Schools*, 60(7), 2237-2256. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/pits.22857>
- [50.] Yu, S., & Cho, E. (2022). Preservice teachers' attitudes toward inclusion in early childhood classrooms: A review of the literature. *Early childhood education journal*, 50(4), 687-698. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10643-021-01187-0>
- [51.] Zhang, K., Cui, X., Wang, R., Mu, C., & Wang, F. (2022). Emotions, illness symptoms, and job satisfaction among kindergarten teachers: the mediating role of emotional exhaustion. *Sustainability*, 14(6), 3261. Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/14/6/3261>